

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A data storage and retrieval system, comprising:

a hosting environment having one or more different applications running on one or more servers at the hosting environment that allows a remote computing device to access data stored at the hosting environment immaterial of whether a particular application for accessing the data is installed on the remote computing device.

2. The data storage and retrieval system of Claim 1, wherein the hosting environment includes a first network that provides access to the data from a remote computing device, a second network that enables interface connectivity between the hosting environment and the remote computing device, a third network that manages and maintains the data at the hosting environment, and a fourth network that controls the operation of the different networks in the hosting environment.

3. The data storage and retrieval system of Claim 2, wherein the first network includes one or more terminal servers that provides access to the data stored at the hosting environment from a remote computing device.

4. The data storage and retrieval system of Claim 3, wherein the terminal servers include a virtual desktop application that enables a remote computing device to access a virtual computing environment at the hosting environment and retrieve the data stored thereat.

5. The data storage and retrieval system of Claim 4, wherein the terminal servers further include a virtual server application that provides a communications interface amongst the networks in the hosting environment.

6. The data storage and retrieval system of Claim 3, wherein the first network is accessible via a virtual private network.

7. The data storage and retrieval system of Claim 3, wherein the first network is accessible directly via the Internet.

8. The data storage and retrieval system of Claim 2, wherein the second network includes one or more front-end servers for communicating with the remote computing device.

- 1 20. A data storage and retrieval system, comprising:
2 a hosting environment having one or more different applications running on one or
3 more servers at the hosting environment, wherein data from a remote computing device is
4 stored at the hosting environment for subsequent retrieval of the data, such that
5 synchronization of the data between the remote computing device and the hosting
6 environment occurs at frequent intervals.
- 1 21. The data storage and retrieval system of Claim 20, wherein the hosting environment
2 includes one or more terminal servers that provides access to the data stored at the hosting
3 environment from a remote computing device.
- 1 22. The data storage and retrieval system of Claim 21, wherein the terminal servers include a
2 virtual desktop application that enables a remote computing device to access a virtual
3 computing environment at the hosting environment and retrieve the data stored thereat.
- 1 23. The data storage and retrieval system of Claim 20, wherein the hosting environment is
2 accessible directly via the Internet using a web browser application.
- 1 24. The data storage and retrieval system of Claim 21, wherein the hosting environment
2 further includes one or more file servers for storing the data at the hosting environment.
- 1 25. The data storage and retrieval system of Claim 24, wherein the file servers are clustered.
- 1 26. The data storage and retrieval system of Claim 20, wherein the computing device is a
2 personal computer.
- 1 27. The data storage and retrieval system of Claim 20, wherein the computing device is a
2 personal data assistant (PDA) device.
- 1 28. A data storage and retrieval method, comprising the steps of:
2 comparing each document on a computing device that is intended to be synchronized
3 with the documents presently stored at a hosting environment to determine whether any of the
4 documents stored on the remote computing device need to be replicated at the hosting
5 environment;

